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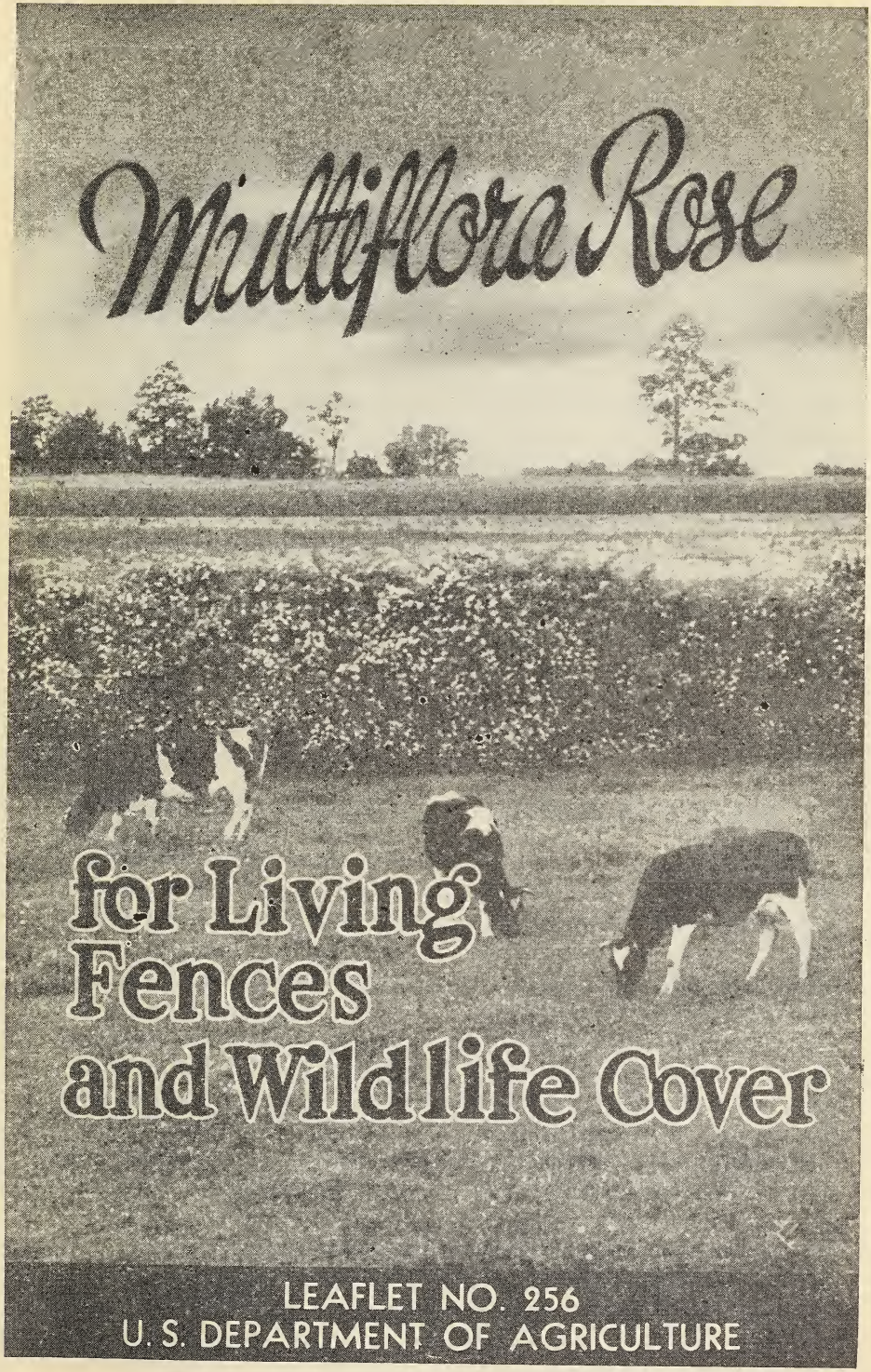
Multiflora Rose
for Living Fences and Wildlife Cover
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MULTIFLORA ROSE—For living fences and wildlife cover

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LIVING fences of multiflora rose are used on more American farms every year. Only recently have farmers come to realize the many advantages of this plant. Chief among these is the fact that it will make a living fence that will keep both your livestock and your soil within its boundaries. It is also the least expensive fence that you can establish and the cheapest to maintain. One thousand plants will give you 1,000 feet of living fence. Where fences of wire or wood do not shelter birds or rabbits, multiflora rose furnishes welcome cover for farm wildlife. As compared with the usual fence, a living fence of multiflora rose is a thing of lasting beauty. In the spring it carries masses of white blooms; in the winter its red fruits brighten the fields. Unlike other fences that must be repaired or replaced, multiflora rose fences last a lifetime and will continue to serve your children.

WHAT THE PLANT IS AND WHERE IT GROWS

Multiflora rose is an Asiatic plant that has been used in this country for a long time as an ornamental. It is much used by rose growers as a hardy rootstalk on which to bud other ornamental varieties of roses. Its new use for soil conservation and erosion control has resulted from more than 10 years of trials by farmers working with the Soil Conservation Service.

On the best soils, multiflora rose reaches a maximum height of 10 feet and about the same width. Its growth is somewhat umbrella-like; canes shoot up 4 to 6 feet or more, then begin to droop, with the slender ends of the side canes hanging almost to the ground.

Multiflora rose does not spread from rootstalks. Drooping side canes, if they touch exposed soil, may take root and grow. Ordinary care of adjacent ground by mowing, cultivating, or grazing will keep the rose from spreading where you don't want it.

When selecting plants for your fence hedge of multiflora rose, be sure they are erect and have stiff thorns. These vigorous plants will give you a living fence in 3 to 6 years. They will bloom every year

for 2 to 3 weeks, beginning in late April in the Southern States and in early June in the northern part of the United States. Later, instead of the flowers, you will have clusters of bright red berries which stay on the plant until displaced by new buds in the spring.

You should not confuse multiflora rose with hedges of Osage-orange, the only other plant commonly used in the United States for a living fence. Unlike Osage-orange hedges, rose fences do not grow tall

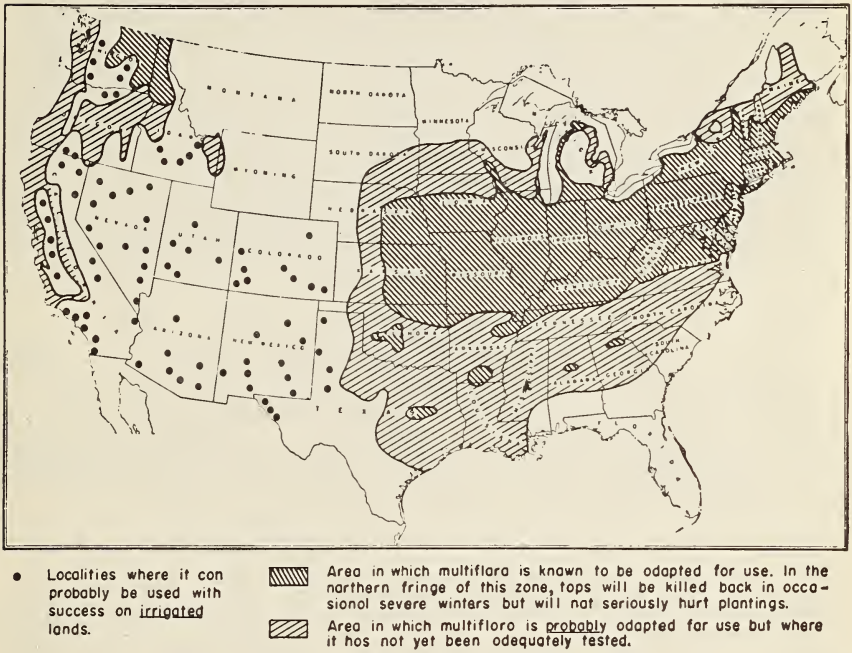
• Localities where it con probably be used with success on irrigated lands.
Area in which multiflora is known to be adapted for use. In the northern fringe of this zone, tops will be killed back in occasional severe winters but will not seriously hurt plantings.
Area in which multiflora is probably adapted for use but where it has not yet been adequately tested.

FIGURE 1.—Map of the United States showing known and probable areas where multiflora rose will grow.

enough to shade adjacent farm crops or to require trimming. They do not have widespreading roots to reduce crop yields. Rose thorns are not long enough to puncture tractor tires. They have windbreak value similar to Osage-orange hedges.

Like most plants, multiflora rose grows best on deep, fertile, well-drained soils. When seedlings are properly planted, they have a high survival rate. Growth is slow on poorly drained and droughty soils. Plantings of multiflora rose have done well on surface coal-mining spoil banks, sand blows, and highway banks. It is not vigorous in shade and should not be planted under trees. The areas best suited for using it in conservation plantings are not yet fully known (fig. 1). You can expect satisfactory performance wherever tea roses are successfully grown.

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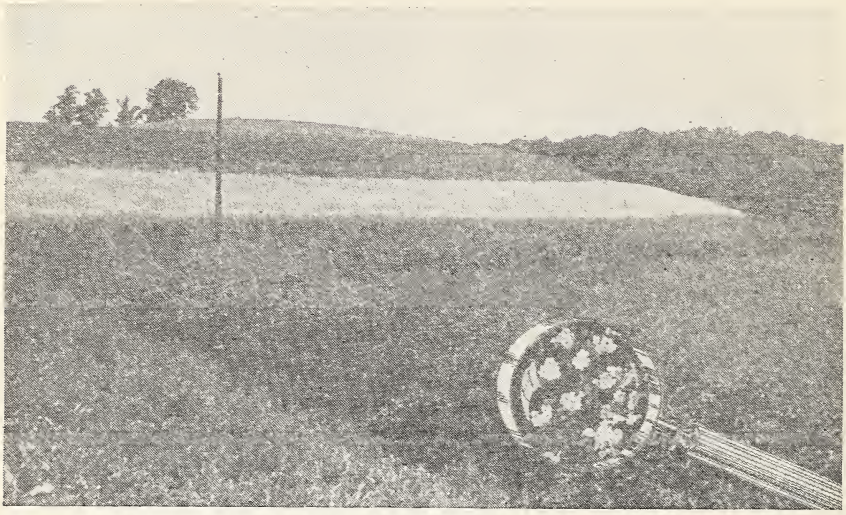


FIGURE 2.—A 5-year contour fence of multiflora rose used between strip-cropped land and pasture.

HOW TO USE MULTIFLORA ROSE

When fully developed, multiflora rose provides an excellent living fence for pastures where horses, cattle, sheep, and goats are grazed. It will also hold hogs that have been ringed. Once a living fence has been established, there is no need for posts or wire except at gates.

You will find this plant suitable for contour fences between cropland and permanent pasture and between cropland fields used for rotational grazing (fig. 2). Living fences aid in better land use by keeping livestock from large gullies, eroding streambanks, farm pond areas, woodlands, and other areas best suited for wildlife land. They help to prevent trespassing along property boundaries.

The thorny, thick-growing canes of multiflora rose make useful cover for farm wildlife (fig. 3). The fruits of this rose are eaten by some game birds and song birds when other food is scarce. It is not a very important food for any kind of farm game. Farm game will benefit most where the rose is used to protect small areas of grass cover and plants that furnish their favorite foods. Its use as a living fence places it on parts of the farm where protective woody cover is usually scarce.

For woodland borders, multiflora rose grows best in the outer rows where it gets plenty of sunlight. In small areas left for cover it may be placed in the outer rows, or in the center of such areas if no trees are used there.

Multiflora rose is used effectively as soil-protecting cover in areas difficult to revegetate, such as highway banks, sand blows, mine spoil, gullies, and eroded slopes. In the Northeast, it has been used successfully to stop sand blows; in the Midwest it has established cover

FIGURE 3.—The thick, twiggy growth of multiflora rose canes provides a dense cover for wildlife throughout the year.

on very badly eroded claypan soils. In such places, however, it should not be expected to develop into livestock-tight living fences.

HOW TO ESTABLISH MULTIFLORA ROSE

For successful plantings, you need healthy plants. Plants with a stem diameter of one-eighth to one-fourth inch and with well-branched roots 6 to 9 inches long are ideal. You should cut off the tops before planting, leaving just a 2- or 3-inch cane to limit the new growth to three or four buds.

This kind of stock is known in the nursery trade as 1-year seedlings which have never been transplanted. Two-year plants, whether transplants or plants 2 years in the seedbed, are apt to be too large. But, if your 2-year plants are of recommended size, they will be satisfactory.

If care is used, you can also establish multiflora rose by seed. It takes a year longer and often results in gaps that have to be replanted, but it is less costly. Fall seeding is best. Spring seeding may be used *if* the seed is stored for 30 to 45 days at 32° to 40° F. in a damp mixture

of peat and sand. If the temperature rises above 40° F. during this period, the seed should be refrigerated.

PREPARING THE SITE

Wherever possible, the site should be prepared with machinery in the fall. For single-row planting plow and harrow a strip about 6 to 8 feet wide with a backfurrow in the middle. Make the strip wider if there are to be more rows. Rows of plants should be 2 feet or more from the edge of the unplowed ground. Break all the sod thoroughly. For best results with multiflora rose, the plants should be free from weed or grass competition the first year. Good site preparation makes care much easier.

If machine preparation of the site is not possible, a thorough sod scalping for each plant is necessary. A square foot of sod removed for each plant will give it a good chance to get ahead of competing weeds.

Plantings in bare areas require no site preparation since there is no plant competition.

PLANTING SUGGESTIONS

Planting can be done with hand tools, such as mattock or shovel. By using plows or planting machines you can plant more rapidly.

If you use a two-bottom plow, you will need someone to place the plants between the furrows. Operate the tractor at a low speed of about 1 mile per hour. The planter should walk behind the slice of the forward-cut furrow, placing the plants against the outside edge of the furrow and ahead of the back plowshare (fig. 4). The rear plowshare then throws dirt into the first furrow and against the row of placed seedlings. Complete the planting by running the tractor wheel along the line of plants to set them firmly. This may also be done by foot tamping.

You should carry the seedlings on the plow in a box or bucket fastened to the beam or beam braces in a position convenient to the planter. Separate the seedling bundles before placing them in the bucket so that the planter can remove them easily. The roots will stay moist if you keep the container partly filled with water.

A single-bottom plow, either tractor or horse-drawn, may also be used. You can do each step separately but it is better to have a helper. First, cut a single furrow on the planting line. Then, place the plants against the slice of the furrow. Make a second run, throwing the slice into the first furrow and against the plants. Firming may be done in the same way as suggested for the two-bottom plow. Since the seedlings are exposed to air until the second furrow is made, you should

FIGURE 4.—Planting multiflora rose seedlings with a two-bottom plow. A planter is shown placing the plant against the back of the front moldboard.

plant in sections of 500 feet or less. This prevents injury to the plants from drying.

Transplanting machines used for setting tomato, tobacco, tree seedling, or other plants are excellent for planting multiflora rose. Even though these machines do the job in one operation, it is advisable to run over the planting line with the tractor wheel to press the soil firmly against the roots.

When planting by hand you should dig a hole in the middle of each scalped spot. In bare areas, dig the hole wherever the plant is to be set. Make the hole big enough to allow for root spreading. Replaced soil should be packed and tamped tightly around the plant.

For fences, the rose plants should be spaced about 12 inches apart in a single row. Even though a few die, no replanting will be necessary unless two or more adjacent plants die. In wildlife cover plantings and windbreaks where the rose is not used for a fence, allow 2 or 3 feet between the plants. Severely eroded places should also be mulched.

Fertilizing, cultivating, and mulching will help the growth of multiflora rose plantings, especially the first year. A complete fertilizer of standard formula, such as 5–10–5, may be used. One pound of this fertilizer for every 40 feet of row used at the time you are preparing the soil should be enough. A side-dressing of 1 pound of nitrate of soda (or equivalent) for every 40 feet is helpful the next year. Plantings on good soils that are fertilized must be cultivated. This is done to prevent severe weed competition. Where plant competition is

vigorous it is best to cultivate even if you have used no fertilizer. On the other hand, you need not cultivate bare sites. Mulching around rose plants substitutes for cultivation and helps retain soil moisture. Straw, hay, sawdust, or manure make good mulch.

CARE OF THE PLANTINGS

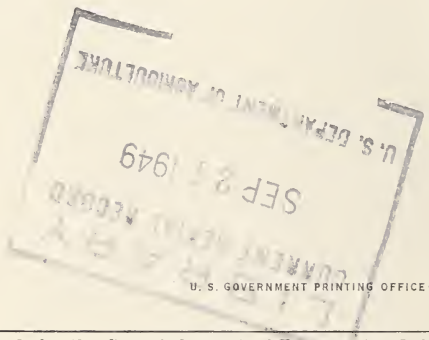
Domestic stock browse multiflora rose only at the branch tips as the thorns quickly discourage them. For this reason, you can develop rose plantings successfully in pastures, provided vigorous plants are used. Avoid planting them along cattle trails where trampling would be serious.

On poor soils, protect the young plants from grazing. On good soils it may be largely a matter of deciding how quickly a barrier is desired. In most cases multiflora rose will provide a fence for your livestock a year or two sooner if protected the first few years. But its final development is not affected by this protection.

Multiflora rose plantings should be protected from fire. Although burning will not usually kill the plants it will destroy the top growth and impair the barrier effect for 1 or 2 years.

In most plantings there will be some losses. On good soils this is usually under 5 percent. If you lose two or more adjacent plants, they should be replaced at the next planting season. This is especially important if it is a fence planting. You will not have a good fence for turning stock if it has any weak spots. The easiest way to replace missing plants is to bend over an adjacent cane and cover it with soil where the new plant is wanted.

Rose hedges allow few other plants to grow beneath them. Any tree seedlings that do come through should be cut out. Honeysuckle or poison ivy vines that climb on the hedge should be cut out as soon as discovered.



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